

Filed for intro on 04/27/98

HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION 769
By Patton

A RESOLUTION to honor the memory of John Cathey, former
East Tennessee State University Sports
Information Director.

WHEREAS, it was with deep sadness and a profound sense of loss that the East Tennessee State University administration, faculty and students, sports fans and professionals and the members of the Tennessee General Assembly learned of the death of one of the most beloved sports figures in the history of our state, John Cathey, who served admirably as the East Tennessee State University Sports Information Director for 25 productive years; and

WHEREAS, the son of the late Frank and Ann Wood Cathey, John Cathey was a native of Gadsden, Alabama; and

WHEREAS, a 1951 graduate of Jacksonville State College, he served his country bravely as a member of the United States Air Force during the Korean War; and

WHEREAS, before coming to East Tennessee State University in 1969, Mr. Cathey expertly covered professional golf, college football and basketball and professional baseball for the *Greenville Daily News*; and

WHEREAS, he also served admirably as the sports editor of the *Anniston* (Alabama) *Star* and as assistant sports editor for the *High Point* (North Carolina) *Enterprise*; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Cathey received considerable praise for his exemplary work at each of these three newspapers; and

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WHEREAS, with his oversized glasses and trademark cigar wedged between his teeth, James Cathey was one of the most easily recognized figures at any athletic contest; and

WHEREAS, he was very proud that he was in the E.T.S.U. pressbox for 271 consecutive football games, at the time the fifth longest such streak in the nation; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Cathey also worked more than 700 ETSU basketball games; and

WHEREAS, he worked under eight athletic directors, and assisted seven football coaches and seven basketball coaches; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Cathey was also present when East Tennessee State University beat a Terry Bradshaw-led Louisiana Tech team 34-14 in the 1969 Grantland Rice Bowl; and

WHEREAS, an estimable role model and leader in his profession, James Cathey was an active member of the College Sports Information Directors of America (CoSIDA), the Football Writers Association of America, the United States Basketball Writers of America, the National Collegiate Baseball Writers Association and the Southern Conference Sports Media Association; and

WHEREAS, Steve White, sports information director at Western Carolina and one of Mr. Cathey's best friends, paid tribute to him by stating: "He had a great personality and seemed to know everybody. We'd go to national conventions, and it would be amazing how many people would come up and say 'hey, John, how are you?' "; and

WHEREAS, former East Tennessee State football coach John Robert Bell has said: "John did a marvelous job in representing East Tennessee State University, not only in professionalism in reporting our sports, but other programs on campus as well. John was what we termed in athletic parlance a team player"; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Cathey evinced his deep faith as an active member of the First Presbyterian Church; and

WHEREAS, he was strongly supported in all his endeavors by his charming wife, Mrs. Mariel Brawner Cathey, his successful children, John Edward "Ward" Cathey, Leigh Ann Cathey Galloway and Shannon Cathey Greene, all of Johnson City; two grandchildren, Brittany Noelle Galloway and Joseph Edward Greene, both of Johnson City and one nephew; and

WHEREAS, it is fitting that we should pause in our deliberations to honor a man who was been a credit to his profession, to East Tennessee State University and to his community; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE ONE-HUNDREDTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE SENATE CONCURRING, That we honor the memory of John Cathey and express our deepest condolences to his family and friends.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That an appropriate copy of this resolution be prepared for presentation with this final clause omitted from such copy.